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TAGS: KG MARR MOPS PREL AF EI

SUBJECT: IRELAND WILL SUPPORT AN EXTENSION OF THE MANAS AIRFIELD AGREEMENT THROUGH EU-WIDE DISCUSSIONS

REF: STATE 081543

Classified By: Political-Economic Counselor Mary E. Daly; Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

(C) On May 25, emboff delivered reftel points to Department of Foreign Affairs International Security Policy Deputy Director David Leahy and met with Third Secretary Louise Hartigan on May 30 to receive the Irish response. Hartigan stated that the GOI is interested in the issues surrounding the need for extending the Manas Airfield agreement, especially in the wake of the recently increased violence in Afghanistan that is expected to spark retaliation. She noted the heightened need to strengthen the presence of coalition forces in the area and vital role that Manas Airfield will continue to play in peacekeeping efforts. Hartigan confirmed Ireland's plans to continue to assist Afghanistan in building a peaceful democratic society by helping to provide a secure and stable environment as a contributing partner to the International Security Assistance Force. Although Ireland does not plan on approaching the Government of Kyrgystan on an individual basis, Hartigan said that the GOI will support USG efforts to renew the Manas Airfield agreement through its participation in EU-wide discussions in Brussels.

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